

REAR AND SIDE PANEL ASSEMBLY FOR A  
VEHICLE AND A METHOD OF ASSEMBLING A VEHICLE

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A rear and side panel assembly for a vehicle body may include a one-piece inner body panel member mated with a one-piece outer body panel member, the body panels cooperating to at least partially define wheel well openings at opposing sides of the vehicle. The inner body panel member may include an inner rear panel portion with opposite ends, a first inner side panel portion at one end and a second inner side panel portion at the opposed end, with the inner side panel portions extending generally frontward from the inner rear panel portion. The outer body panel member may include an outer rear panel portion with opposite ends, a first outer side panel portion at one end and a second outer side panel portion at the opposed end, with the outer side panel portions extending generally frontward from the outer rear panel portion. A method of assembling a vehicle including the rear and side panel assembly described above may include forming the inner body panel member and forming the outer body panel member by quick plastic forming, super plastic forming or hydroforming. The method may further include bending the inner and outer body panel members, and mounting the inner and outer body panels to each other such that the outer body panel member substantially covers the outer face of the inner body panel member.